CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method of generating a knowledge neighborhood comprising:

2   selecting a set of knowledge profiles associated with a root concept;

3   determining a knowledge neighbor for the root concept, the knowledge neighbor

4 being a concept common to the selected knowledge profiles; and

5   deriving an affinity for the knowledge neighbor to represent a relationship between

6 the root concept and the knowledge neighbor.

1   2.   The method of claim 1 further comprising:

2   using the knowledge neighbor as a new root concept to determine an additional

3 knowledge neighbor.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, wherein determining a knowledge neighbor comprises:

2   filtering all concepts common to the selected knowledge profiles against a pre-

3 determined confidence level threshold.

1   4.   The method of claim 1, wherein selecting the set of knowledge profiles comprises:

2   filtering all knowledge profiles associated with the root concept against a pre-

3 determined confidence level threshold.

1   5.   The method of claim 1 further comprising:

2   obtaining an identity for the root concept.

1   6.   The method of claim 1, wherein obtaining the identity for the root concept

2 comprises:

3   receiving a user selection of the root concept.

1   7.   The method of claim 1, wherein the root concept is selected from the group

2 consisting of a knowledge term, a profile, a search criteria, and a document.

1 8.   The method of claim 1 further comprising:

2   creating a knowledge map to graphically illustrate the root concept, the knowledge

3 neighbor, and the affinity.

1 9.   The method of claim 8 further comprising:

2   using the knowledge map to designate the knowledge neighbor as a new root

3 concept to determine an additional knowledge neighbor.

1 10.   The method of claim 8 further comprising:

2   overlaying the knowledge map on an earlier generated knowledge map.

1 11.   The method of claim 8 further comprising:

2   graphically illustrating more than one knowledge neighbor as a single knowledge

3 neighbor.

1 12.   The method of claim 8, wherein creating the knowledge map comprises:

2   graphically illustrating the knowledge neighbor if it satisfies an affinity threshold.

1 13.   The method of claim 8, wherein the knowledge map is a directed graph

2 comprising:

3   a node representing the root concept;

4   a node representing the knowledge neighbor; and

5   an edge representing the affinity, the edge graphically linking the node representing

6   the root concept and the node representing the knowledge neighbor.

1 14.   The method of claim 13, wherein the edge is illustrated with a length proportional

2 to the affinity.

1 15.   The method of claim 13, wherein the edge is illustrated with a color assigned to the

2 affinity.

1 16.   The method of claim 1, wherein deriving the affinity comprises:

2   counting the knowledge profiles associated with the knowledge neighbor; and

3   calculating the affinity using the count of the knowledge profiles.

1   17.   The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the affinity comprises:

2   factoring in a confidence level for the knowledge neighbor in each of the counted

3   knowledge profiles.

1   18.   The method of claim 1, wherein deriving the affinity comprises using a formula

2       $$\sum_{P=1}^{N} L(R)_P * L(C)_P$$

3   to calculate the affinity, wherein N is a count of the knowledge profiles associated with the

4   knowledge neighbor, R is the root concept, C is the knowledge neighbor, L(R) is a

5   confidence level for the root concept in a profile P, and L(C) is the confidence level of the

6   knowledge neighbor in the profile P.

1   19.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions

2   comprising:

3   selecting a set of knowledge profiles associated with a root concept;

4   determining a knowledge neighbor for the root concept, the knowledge neighbor

5   being a concept common to the selected knowledge profiles; and

6   deriving an affinity for the knowledge neighbor to represent a relationship between

7   the root concept and the knowledge neighbor.

1   20.   The computer-readable medium of claim 19 having further instructions

2   comprising:

3   using the knowledge neighbor as a new root concept to determine an additional

4   knowledge neighbor.

1   21.   The computer-readable medium of claim 19 having further instructions

2   comprising:

3   obtaining an identity for the root concept.

1   22.   The computer-readable medium of claim 19 having further instructions

2   comprising:

3   creating a knowledge map to graphically illustrate the root concept, the knowledge

4   neighbor, and the affinity.

1   23.   The computer-readable medium of claim 22 having further instructions

2   comprising:

3   using the knowledge map to designate the knowledge neighbor as a new root

4   concept to determine an additional knowledge neighbor.

1   24.   The computer-readable medium of claim 22 having further instructions

2   comprising:

3   overlaying the knowledge map on an earlier generated knowledge map for the root

4   concept.

1   25.   The computer-readable medium of claim 22 having further instructions

2   comprising:

3   graphically illustrating more than one knowledge neighbor as a single knowledge

4   neighbor.

1   26.   A computer system comprising:

2   a processing unit;

3   a memory coupled to the processing unit through a bus;

4   a computer-readable medium coupled to the processing unit through the bus; and

5   a knowledge neighborhood generation process executed from the computer-

6   readable medium to cause the processing unit to select a set of knowledge profiles

7   associated with a root concept, determine a knowledge neighbor for the root concept from

8   the selected knowledge profiles, and derive an affinity for the knowledge neighbor.

1   27.   The computer system of claim 26, wherein the knowledge neighborhood generation

2   process further causes the processing unit to use the knowledge neighbor as a new root

3   concept to determine an additional knowledge neighbor.

1   28.   The computer system of claim 26, wherein the knowledge neighborhood generation

2   process further causes the processing unit to obtain an identity for the root concept.

1   29.   The computer system of claim 26 further comprising:

2   a knowledge mapping process executed from the computer-readable medium to

3   cause the processing unit to graphically illustrate the knowledge neighbor and the affinity

4   as a knowledge neighborhood for the root concept.

1   30.   The computer system of claim 29, wherein the knowledge mapping process further

2   causes the processing unit to graphically overlay the knowledge neighborhood on an

3   earlier generated knowledge neighborhood for the root concept.